



ASD Service Beacon

A regular publication for FSIS field and headquarters employees.

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bea-con (bēk n) *noun*

A signaling or guiding device, such as a lighthouse, located on a coast. A source of guidance or inspiration.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Innovation Requires Communication

by Glen Durst

Telephone: 202-720-3551

In the July 1997 edition of the *ASD Service Beacon*, I discussed how change provides an opportunity for innovation and that ASD is committed to providing the required services to all of our employees and will use all innovations necessary to provide them in a user-friendly, timely, and effective manner. In the September issue, I discussed the innovations we were making with sample shipping containers. I indicated that our shipping containers had been recognized within the packaging industry for several innovations. One included using 3M ScotchMate Loop and Hook Industrial Fasteners (similar to Velcro) to provide a closure that precludes the need for tape, thus providing quicker sample removal at the laboratory and sample packaging at the plant, and fewer knife cuts.

All three laboratories now have small and HACCP shipping containers with the new closure system. These new containers are being phased in as the older containers are removed from the system. At the Eastern Laboratory, approximately 30% of the containers with the new closure system are

coming back with tape securing the box. This is unnecessary since these containers will stay closed without any tape. Even if they came open during shipment (which is unlikely based upon the extensive testing we have performed), the foam plug will still keep the sample within the box.

I request that the word go forward: **boxes with the new closure system do not need to be taped.** Whether you are a District Manager, Circuit Supervisor, Inspector-In-Charge, Inspector, or Compliance Officer, please pass this message along to any of your employees or colleagues who are involved in collecting or shipping samples to the laboratories. The laboratory staffs would appreciate your cooperation in not taping these new sample shipping containers. Included in this issue are two additional articles authored by laboratory employees on this matter.

To comment on this newsletter or to submit an article for publication, please e-mail, write, or fax:

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OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

USDA Safety and Health Conference

by Tom Wright

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The biennial USDA Safety and Health Conference was held in New Orleans, LA, April 20 - 24, 1998. Approximately 350 USDA and 38 FSIS employees attended the Conference. The Conference theme was "Partnerships in Safety and Health." Bill West, Designated Agency Safety and Health Official gave a status report on the FSIS safety and health program at the opening session of the Conference.

Field Operations and the National Joint Council of Food Inspection Locals held their quarterly safety and health committee meeting in conjunction with the Conference. The remaining Agency segments and employee organizations met to explore the establishment of safety and health committees.

We plan to publish several in-depth articles on the Conference and the recommendations made by FSIS attendees in the next edition of the *ASD Service Beacon*.

Multi-District Safety Committee Meeting Minutes, February 4-5, 1998

by Harry E. Springfield Jr.
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The Multi-District Safety Committee for the District's of Albany, Boston, Greenbelt, and Philadelphia was held on February 4-5, 1998. The following Committee members made presentations on Safety and Occupational Health related issues:

Dana Broussard, Boston District: Presentation demonstrated how the Augusta, Maine Circuit Safety Committee created a Booklet of Safety Issuance's.

Dorothy Coleman, Greenbelt District: Delivered a presentation on General Safety and Occupational Health issues.

John Franco, Philadelphia District: Delivered a presentation detailing how the Philadelphia Circuit Safety Committee's participated in a Safety Stand Down Day sponsored by the Defense Supply Center.

Augustus Fricker, Philadelphia District: Reported on Hazardous Conditions that exist in Meat and Poultry plants.

Richard Hackenbracht, Greenbelt District: Reported on Air Quality Problem Involving Chlorine and Ammonia, which was affecting FSIS employees at a Poultry Slaughter plant and efforts to resolve this problem.

Daniel Lessard, Boston District: Delivered a presentation on Safety and Health Incentive Programs that have been developed to help Reduce Illnesses and Injuries.

Howard O'Neill, Albany, District: Delivered a presentation on the positive and negative points of an attempt at combining local Circuit

Safety Committee's in some Metropolitan area's.

Raymond Walty, Albany District: Delivered a presentation concerning Air Quality problems involving Chlorine which was affecting FSIS employees, and the need to withdraw FSIS employees from environment where serious hazards exist.

Harry Springfield, Safety and Health Specialist, Environmental, Health and Safety Branch: Facilitated the meeting and delivered a presentation on general Safety and Occupational Health issues, which included orientation on the New FSIS Safety and Occupational Health directives and related forms and their uses. In addition a demonstration of the new Safety and Health monitoring equipment recently issued to each Safety and Occupational Health Specialist, by the Environmental, Health and Safety Branch, was conducted.

Robert Owens, Safety and Health Manager, Field Operations: Delivered an in-depth presentation on the subject of the Agency's and Employee's individual responsibilities for Safety and Health. In addition a presentation was conducted which involved Focusing on the Entire Environment in which you are employed as a means to becoming more aware of your entire surroundings, and possibly Avoiding Future Injuries and Illnesses.

Associate Deputy Administrator John McCutcheon, Field Operations: Indicated that the Agency has made Safety and Occupational Health a priority, and pointed to the dedication of resources as an indication of the Agencies commitment.

Also in attendance was Safety and Occupational Health Specialist Roger Perkerewicz, Boulder, Colorado, and Vineland Circuit Safety Committee personnel, Circuit

Supervisor Florante Relossa, Asghar Chaudhry, Russell Clarke, and Joanne Burgos. Also in attendance was James Preshong, Representative for the National Joint Council of Food Inspection Locals.

The Multi-District Safety Committee adopted several action items as a result of this meeting:

1. Recommendation by the committee that the minutes of all Local Circuit Safety Committees be distributed to all other Local Circuit Safety Committees within each District, to raise the awareness of Safety and Occupational Health issues.
2. The Field Operations (FO) Safety and Health Manager determine the feasibility of creating an Electronic Catalog of Safety and Occupational Health Issuance's and related information.
3. All Multi-District Safety Committee members request input from all Local Circuit Safety Committee members, who would provide feedback on Safety Committee Training needs.

The next meeting of the Multi-District Safety Committee for the Districts of Albany, Boston, Greenbelt, and Philadelphia will be held June 3-4, 1998.

REMEMBER! DON'T LEARN ABOUT SAFETY BY ACCIDENT.

SUPPLIES

Field Supply System Customer Survey

by Pete Bridgeman
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The Personal Property, Motor Vehicle and Supply Section values its customers, and we continually strive to meet your needs in the field and to make improvements to the

Field Supply System. While we've done everything within our resources to develop a customer-friendly, responsive system, we often receive feedback and suggestions from you, our customers, on ways we can improve it. We consider suggestion as an opportunity to improve, and whenever feasible, we don't hesitate to implement a change or add an item to our inventory. We are developing a survey to go out to all of our customers to determine your satisfaction with the FSIS Field Supply System.

New Item - Instant Cold Packs

We've added a new first-aid item to the Specialty Items available from Landover. Instant Cold Packs will come in a package of 4 (each pack can be used one time only); the item number is FSIS-55.

New Forms

FSIS Form 6510-10, "Nu-Tech Inspection System Presentation Log", dated 12/97, is now available in Landover. The Unit of Issue is "EA" (each).

FSIS Form 1400-96, "Label-Fax Transmittal", which is a label to affix to FSIS 3530-4 to identify T & A's being faxed, will be available around the end of June in Landover. The Unit of Issue of this item will be PAD50 (pad of 50 labels).

What to do when the wrong item is delivered?

Call the toll-free number (1-800-714-8335) with the order number and the discrepancy. If there are items that need to be returned, we'll also need to know the number of boxes you have to go back. We'll make arrangements with Landover to have the carrier pick the box(es) up and return them to Landover. We'll also take steps to ensure you are sent the correct items.

How to Get a New Account Established in Landover?

Call the toll free number, or send the information to Room 2158 South Building, and a new account will be set up and a Welcome Kit sent out.

New Sample Shipping Containers

by Robyn Johnson
Eastern Laboratory
Telephone: 706-546-3576

All three field laboratories now have the sample boxes with the new closure system. At the Eastern Laboratory, we have been pleased with their performance thus far. The new closure system saves the laboratory time and money with its ease in opening and closing and reduces the need for expensive shipping tape. We hope that the new box also saves the inspector time by eliminating the need to obtain and use tape. Some of the old style boxes are still in circulation, however, these box overwraps will be replaced with the new ones as needed. All sample boxes, except for the large LM54U (1' X 2' rectangle), will have the new closure system.

As a reminder, ***please do not tape the new closure sample box!***

If you need supplies or have a shipping problem, call, HPDesk, or fax your request to the laboratory listed on the sampling request form. When calling, please provide the following information:

- Daytime telephone number;
- The establishment number of the plant in need of supplies, including any code letters, e.g. 245L M;
- Number and size of supplies needed; and
- The name/number code of the program you need supplies for, e.g., MT03, E. coli.

Remember, all nonspecific, non-sterile sampling supplies, such as plastic bags and rubber bands, are now provided by the Landover Service Center, not the laboratories.

Some useful contact points for further information:

General:
FSIS Technical Center
Tel: 800-233-3935
Fax: 402-221-7421

Laboratory Supplies:
Eastern Laboratory
Tel: 706-546-3331
Fax: 706-546-3383

Midwestern Laboratory
Tel: 314-263-2680, ext. 334
Fax: 314-263-2679

Western Laboratory
Tel: 510-337-5031
Fax: 510-337-5036

New Tapeless USDA Shipping Boxes

by Sheree Johns
Midwestern Laboratory
Telephone: 314-263-2680

The new sample shipping boxes are on the scene and the shipping and receiving personnel at the Midwestern Laboratory are ecstatic. We have sent fliers to Midwestern Laboratory HACCP inspectors stating the advantages of the new fasteners. Also, stickers have been attached to the large flaps of the boxes to remind inspectors of the new closure method:

**PLEASE DO NOT TAPE
THE NEW SAMPLE SHIPPING
CONTAINERS!
THANK YOU**

Everyone's attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

DIRECTIVES MANAGEMENT

Checklist of Agency Issuances

by Mary M. Wissman
Telephone: 202-720-8287

FSIS Checklist 1-98 provides a listing of FSIS issuances and gives

instructions for discontinuing issuances for FSIS use. Checklist 1-98 covers the first quarter of calendar year 1998 (January 1 through March 31, 1998). Copies have been printed and distributed to FSIS offices. For Headquarters employees, an electronic version of Checklist 1-98 has been placed in the "Agency Issuances" public folder in Outlook.

FSIS Checklist 1-98 and the following three notices issued since March 31 provide a complete inventory of issuance activity since publication of the 1998 edition of the FSIS Directives Numeric and Subject Index.

Notice 12-98 (4/8/98)

Notification to Establishments of Intended Enforcement Actions

Notice 13-98 (4/10/98)

Shuttle Service Schedule Change

Notice 14-98 (4/20/98)

Inspection Decision Appeals

Directives and notices are distributed automatically to applicable Agency employees and offices. Additional copies are available from Printing and Distribution Section in Washington, DC; telephone: 202-720-4661.

VEHICLES

Vehicles Update

by Brian McNiff

Telephone: 202-720-4162

The U.S. Government Fleet Service Card is issued to all drivers of government vehicles and may only be used for the vehicle the driver is assigned. The card is used for the purchase of gasoline for the driver's assigned vehicle. In the event of loss of this credit card, the operator is to immediately notify the issuing FMC (Fleet Management Center)

and arrangements for replacement will be made. Normal replacement will be three to five working days. If gasoline is needed during this time, the operator must submit a receipt and forward a SF 1164 (Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business) to the issuing FMC.

The Annual High-Mileage Notice is being distributed to the field this month for FY99 high mileage commitments. Although the stated deadline for return of completed commitments to this office is May 15th, we will accept commitments beyond this date due to the lateness in this Notice being distributed. We request that all commitments be made on the newly updated FSIS Form 3800-2 (3/98), which will be attached to the Notice. This form now requires all operators currently driving a government vehicle to list the tag number of the vehicle assigned to them. Additional copies of this form can be obtained from PPMVSS at 1-800-714-8335.

When a new or replacement vehicle is received or you turn in your government vehicle, please forward a copy of the GSA Form 1152 (Vehicle Assignment /Termination Sheet) with a new Vehicle Data Sheet (FSIS 2450-6) to this office.

If you are involved in a motor vehicle accident while on duty, please submit a copy of your completed SF-91 (Motor Vehicle Accident Report), along with the police report (if applicable) to this office right away. We continue to receive Tort Claims for accidents that were never reported. In order to be protected under the Federal Tort Claim Act this form must be submitted to the Office of General Counsel when processing all motor vehicle tort claims.

All questions regarding motor vehicles, high mileage

commitments, vehicle accidents and related Tort Claims should be directed to Mr. Brian McNiff at 202-720-4162.

PROCUREMENT

I.M.P.A.C. Purchase Card

by Janet Elm

Telephone: 202-720-0572

In the January 1998 issue of the *ASD Service Beacon*, we wrote about the Purchase Card Management System (PCMS). This system will be used to process, pay, and reconcile purchases on-line with the National Finance Center. The PCMS will replace the paper Visa statement that your office is currently receiving every month. Listed below are the PC requirements to operate the PCMS. Cardholders whose computers or telecommunications do not meet the above requirements should contact their IRM Specialist.

Workstation:

CPU: Minimum of 486 chip with 66 MHz clock speed
Memory: Minimum of 16 MB preferably 24 MB RAM
Storage: Minimum of 100 MB available on hard drive
System Presentation: Windows 3.1x
Operating System: Windows 3.1x, Windows 95, and NT
Monitor Resolution: 800x600 CD-ROM: CD-ROM drive desirable (Not necessary to run PCMS)

Telecommunications:

Modem 28.8 kbps

In the District Offices not all cardholders will need to have PCMS installed onto their computers. We are requesting one computer in every District Office to have PCMS installed.

